

THE 7TH EDITION OF DUBAI DESIGN WEEK IS NOW OPEN

Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikh Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) and member of Dubai Council

- The region's most important creative festival opens today, with over **260 free-to-attend events and activities** at its main hub in Dubai Design District (d3) and around the city, from 8-13 November
- With **430 UAE-based designers** and **560 companies** participating in this year's edition, Dubai Design Week presents its most comprehensive edition to date
- Returning with more than 150 international and regional exhibiting brands, the region's leading fair for original and high-quality design, **Downtown Design** is back at its bespoke venue on the d3 Waterfront
- **MENA Grad Show** features 60 of the most innovative ideas and solutions to make the world a better place from the brightest minds coming out of the region's universities, in the fields of technology, science and design
- In an immersive multi-media exhibition, the **2040: d3 Architecture Exhibition** features five architectural firms presenting concepts of how Dubai could look in 20 years
- An annually themed initiative supported by **A.R.M. Holding**, the **Urban Commissions 2021** winning proposal 'Yowalah' by Beirut-based **Bits to Atoms** is announced; an interactive intervention under the theme of PLAY!
- An immersive showcase, **AIUla Design** will take visitors on a journey to the Saudi Arabian landmark destination and its cultural significance
- This year's **Abwab** commission was awarded to Dubai-based architect Ahmed El-Sharabassy for his pavilion 'Nature in Motion' by responding to the theme of regenerative architecture and restorative design
- Returning with its second iteration, the **UAE Designer Exhibition 2.0** unveils works by 30+ emerging and undiscovered creative talents who are based in the UAE and producing locally
- Curated with people and the planet in mind, the **Making Space** hosts a programme of more than 80 workshops for visitors of all ages and levels of experience, under the theme of 'Paper, Plastic + Play'
- On the weekend, 12-13 November, **The Marketplace** will present an even more varied experience, with a curated selection of original, high-quality products and 50+ new participants this year

United Arab Emirates, Dubai, 8 November 2021: Staged in strategic partnership with **Dubai Design District (d3)** alongside **Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture)** and supported by **A.R.M. Holding**, Dubai Design Week 2021 opens today with a varied line-up of over 260 activities taking place at the festival's main hub in d3 and around the city.

Reinforcing Dubai's position as the region's central hub for design and creativity, the seventh edition Dubai Design Week presents its most extensive and diverse programme of events to date, with 430 UAE-based designers and 560 companies participating in a range of activities, from engaging exhibitions, pop-ups and installations to talks, masterclasses and hands-on workshops, accessible for visitors of all ages and levels of skill.

Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority, said: "This seventh edition of Dubai Design Week, will see the design industry's most influential creatives from around the world converge in our city for the region's most important creative festival. Not only has the design fair become a key element in the region's cultural and creative industries agenda, but its rich programme also showcases and engages both the industry and the wider public in a fun, thought-provoking, and accessible way. Dubai Design Week goes beyond presenting aesthetic and practical designs, but also design solutions to complex global challenges, with the potential to enhance our day to day lives and even our future. We are proud of the growth of this incredible platform over the years and invite everyone to immerse themselves in all that this design week has to offer."

Programme Highlights

Visitors can discover the latest in design at the Middle East's leading fair for original and high-quality design, **Downtown Design**, from 8 – 12 November. Showcasing more than 150 international and regional exhibiting brands and designers from over 20 countries, complemented by extensive collateral activations including a stellar talks programme featuring global industry experts. This year the fair hosts five national collective showcases from Austria, France, Hungary, Italy and Spain, while **Downtown Editions**, the fair's boutique section dedicated to limited-edition and bespoke design, will once again uncover the latest in design by individual designers, studios and creative collaborations with a spotlight on the region such as the works of four designers selected for the 2021 Tanween Programme by Tashkeel, unveiled at the fair.

An interactive installation by award-winning **NIU Studio** will bring together contemporary design and technology in a unique multisensory experience, while **Broadway Interiors** created the concept for The Lounge Bar, an eclectic, stimulating environment inspired by the Dubai landscape and The Café by The Lighthouse is designed by prominent practice **Lulie Fisher Design Studio**.

Showcasing social impact innovation projects in the fields of science, design, technology and architecture by students from universities in the region, **MENA Grad Show** returns in its second edition, featuring 60 ideas and solutions by 78 students from 29 universities across 10 countries from the region. This year's projects include a solar powered robot built to plant seeds in desert areas, a device to produce organic super-food at home, an app to organize the routine of dementia patients and magnetic skin to allow people with quadriplegia to control their surroundings.

MENA Grad Show is part of **Global Grad Show**, the leading international platform supporting social impact innovators in universities across the world. Today, Global Grad Show also unveils 150 game-changing projects for its seventh edition through a digital exhibition at www.globalgradshow.com.

A multi-media exhibition gathering leading architectural firms and visionary architects practicing in the UAE and the MENA region, the **2040: d3 Architecture Exhibition** features concepts envisioning the future of the city, in accordance with the goals of The Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan for a sustainable urban development, presented by five architecture firms; Beyrac Architects, Dabbagh Architects, MEAN* Middle East Architecture Network in collaboration with Concreative, RMJM Dubai and Tariq Khayyat Design Partners (TKDP).

Khadija Al Bastaki, Executive Director of Dubai Design District (d3), said: “As a strategic partner, we are delighted to unveil today the 7th edition of Dubai Design Week with its most extensive programme to date, cementing Dubai’s position as a UNESCO City of Design and a global creative capital. Organising the festival at such a scale is testament to our ever-growing and flourishing creative ecosystem at d3. It is always our mission at d3 to bring the design and creative community together, to exchange ideas, nurture and showcase talent, learn, collaborate and inspire – and Dubai Design Week certainly does this. We look forward to welcoming visitors this week to see the rich array of creativity, innovation and talent on show.”

Installations

Throughout the festival’s main hub in Dubai Design District (d3), visitors can explore 15 installations and public interventions in the open-air setting. This year’s **Urban Commissions**, an annually themed Dubai Design Week initiative supported by A.R.M. Holding, has been awarded to Beirut-based architecture and research firm, **Bits to Atoms**, for an interactive urban intervention titled ‘Yowalah’, a modular 3D printed public space installation aiming to safely reinstate social relations and increase the levels of happiness for users.

Responding to the theme of regenerative design and restorative architecture, the **Abwab 2021** commission has been awarded to Dubai-based architect **Ahmed El-Sharabassy** for his proposal ‘Nature in Motion’, an undulating design concept that references the Dubai desert’s constant motion, emulating the city’s continual evolution. The architectural pavilion will host an exhibition titled ‘**Pulp Fusion**’ around the topic of the human impact on the planet, curated and produced by Bits to Atoms.

Collaborating with emerging Emirati creative **Hessa Al Suwaidi**, **Bentley Motors** is presenting ‘Safeefa’, a creative concept drawing from an integral part of traditional Emirati weaving and the Bentley brand’s design and craftsmanship. ‘The Shape of Light’ by conceptual art studio **Shuster + Moseley** will explore geometric prismatic forms through a large-scale, specially commissioned glass installation and an immersive architectural concept by **Ana Carreras** for **Lever/Mirage**, titled ‘Athenaeum’, illuminates the recent findings of the 3000-year-old city of Mleiha. ‘Context Reflections’, by **ANARCHITECT** led by **Jonathan Ashmore** in collaboration with **Cosentino**, will invite visitors to discover the intriguing play of penetrated light created via a naturally occurring optical phenomenon in a low-tech installation using carbon-neutral materials.

A colourful outdoor installation built from recycled materials, ‘Connectivity’ by **Kart Group** represents the significance and beauty of social connections, while celebrating the diversity of Dubai. ‘The Plume’ by **Mohammad Mazen**, a student at Ajman University College of Architecture, Art and Design, is inspired by migratory birds which reflects the educational journey and is built using recycled aluminium and acrylic materials.

‘Morphing Nature’, by **Kristina Zanic Design Studio** for **Trend Middle East** marks an entrance to Dubai Design Week in d3 by telling a story of sustainability and earth preservation, while ‘The WAW Machine’ by Emirati creatives **Iman Almidfa** and **Hessa Ali Alechla** behind Wild Arab West (WAW) greets visitors with positive affirmations and cultural sayings in English and Arabic, through an automated vending machine promoting kindness between people and the world.

Pop-ups and Exhibitions

The globally significant heritage and extraordinary geological destination in North West Saudi Arabia, **AIUla** present an immersive experience designed by **Gio Forma** and **Black Engineering**, and inspired by the extraordinary rock formations in the region's desert and mountain landscapes.

Providing a platform for emerging creatives, the **UAE Designer Exhibition 2.0** presents over 30 emerging and undiscovered talents ranging from **Omar Al Gurg** and **Farah Ahmed's** furniture pieces, to textile design from **Shaikha AlTeneiji** and **Haneen Charawi**, alongside contemporary pieces and objects created using modern manufacturing technologies, by **Alaa Shibly**, **Nyxo Studio**, **Sara Al Harbali** and more. The exhibition also showcases a range of handmade homeware accessories using traditional craft techniques by **Aditi Patwari**, **Nora Mohammed** and **Raghad Al Ali**, among others.

The Beirut Concept Store features works by 50 established designers and emerging creatives based in Lebanon in a showcase curated by **Mariana Wehbe**, presenting the diversity and talent of the Lebanese creative, from tableware and stationary to books and small gift items.

Shedding light on creatives and makers working with clay, **Ceramatastic** will feature a wide range of works made in the UAE, including finalists of the 5th Dubai Ceramic Award, an initiative by the **American University of Dubai**, and a series of works by **Yadawei Ceramic Studio** members, celebrating the golden jubilee of the UAE, alongside pieces by **Faissal El-Malak**, **Michael Rice** and **Tamara Barrage**, in a space is activated with workshops and demonstrations on the potter's wheel, dressed by a colourful mural 'La Playa' by ceramicist and artist, **Lena Kassicieh**.

In collaboration with creative studio **Hamzat Wasl** and **Zayed University**, the **Embassy of Switzerland to the UAE and Bahrain** presents an exhibition highlighting the preservation of the printing press and design, while an exhibition titled 'Design Your Future!', a collaboration between **L'Institut Français of the UAE** and **Cité Internationale du Design**, focuses on the challenges of the design process from idea to application, for a brighter transition to the future. Meanwhile, a pop-up showcase by the **Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI)** titled 'One Grain at a Time' invites visitors to reflect on the transience of time and boundlessness of space through an immersive intervention and 'Together', an active and colourful pop-up space by **Jotun** is centred around the unique moods that arise when people meet.

Enabling platform for entrepreneurs and startups, **in5 Design** present a multidisciplinary showcase, highlighting emerging and innovative practices, featuring both technology-driven design and traditional user-centered design paradigms, while a pop-up exhibition presented by **IED Istituto Europeo di Design** features projects by the school's alumni, focused on sustainability, lightness and fragility, including a pendant light created from eggshells.

Bringing Portuguese flair and creativity to the Middle East, **Associative Design - The Best of Portugal** will showcase an interpretation of traditional Arabic houses, featuring pieces designed and produced in Portugal in a mix of innovation, sustainability and contemporary design, from furniture and porcelain to textiles.

Talks, Workshops & Masterclasses

Visitors can register to attend more than 150 activities; from hands-on workshops and pottery demonstrations to engaging talks and industry masterclasses, presented throughout the week-long festival to bring impactful experiences for both design professionals and those of all ages. The **Making Space**, a programme of more than 80 workshops held under the theme of 'Paper, Plastic + Play', provides visitors of all ages and levels of experience with the opportunity to experiment with ancient and innovative ways of making and creating; from pottery or reforming plastic to papermaking or using soap as a new medium.

Mette Degn-Christensen, Director of Dubai Design Week, commented: "We are thrilled to be opening this important edition of Dubai Design Week, at a time when the need for, and the impact of impactful design is becoming increasingly crucial to address the serious global issues that we and the planet currently face. We also wanted to ensure that this edition put people and activities at the centre of the festival in d3 to actively engage visitors, and are proud to present our most extensive line-up of events and activities to date. These activities have been designed for visitors of all ages and at all levels of experience, with a strong emphasis on human-centric experiences, community-led activations and a focus on positive narratives and solutions through creativity and design."

A daily programme of gatherings, curated by Fatma Al Mahmoud, **Meet the UAE Creatives** brings the local creative community and its stakeholders together in a series of engaging dialogues in an informal setting in one of d3's bespoke eateries. Participants include **Abdalla Almulla, Hani Asfour, Lujain Abulfaraj, Laila Binbrek** and **Lina Ghalib**, around topics such as, graphic design and content creation as well as design education and production in the UAE.

The Forum at Downtown Design will host a series of compelling live interviews and discussions between leading regional and international architects, interior and product designers on each afternoon of the fair, staged in a dynamic amphitheatre specially designed by ema to promote interaction and engagement.

An experiential programme of talks and masterclasses, hosted by renowned local and international speakers, will take place in the pop-up space by ATÖLYE Dubai titled 'The Re:turn'.

Weekend Programme

A consciously curated shopping experience for all the family in a safe outdoor setting in the heart of d3, **The Dubai Design Week Marketplace** returns with its second edition, 12-13 November, with an even more varied experience. Supported by **Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture)**, The Marketplace presents some of the city's best artisans, entrepreneurs and small businesses, offering quality and original products that are predominantly sourced and made in the UAE, with 50+ new participants this year, a curated selection of artisanal Lebanese delicacies and ceramics, mouth blown glass and unique hand-crafted designs, to support designers and producers working in Beirut.

A series of multi-disciplinary activations and engaging activities will offer creative experiences, including delicious food offerings, a programme of live music sessions and entertainment as well as over 30 workshops and activities for all age

ranges for those wishing to get in touch with their creative side, from pottery to tree planting and fun water colour spray painting to flower pressing.

Around the city, an array of events will be held in conjunction with Dubai Design Week; from the opening of Dubai's first collectible design gallery, **COLLECTIONAL** by H&H, launching with an exhibition titled 'The Shape of Things to Come' and showcasing an exclusively commissioned collection by internationally acclaimed designer **Sabine Marcelis**, to a host of dynamic showcases at the **Jameel Arts Centre** and **Alserkal Avenue**, amongst others.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

For all upcoming announcements and updates, visit dubaidesignweek.ae and follow [@dubaidesignweek](https://twitter.com/dubaidesignweek) | [#DXBDW2021](https://twitter.com/DXBDW2021).

Dubai Design Week is a free-to-attend event. Visitors can download the free Dubai Design Week app to discover the full programme, register for Downtown Design and be kept updated on the latest health and safety guidelines. Available on Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

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About Dubai Design Week

Held under the dedicated patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (Dubai Culture), Dubai Design Week is a platform for regional design as well as a catalyst for the growth of the creative community in Dubai. The festival's varied programme consists of design-related events, exhibitions, installations, competitions, talks and workshops across multiple creative disciplines. Key components of Dubai Design Week include the region's leading fair for high-quality, original design, Downtown Design; MENA Grad Show, bringing innovative projects from the Middle East and North Africa in an exhibition focusing on solutions to improve and transform lives – an initiative by Global Grad Show, a year-round programme for graduate students across the world; Abwab, the annually re-modelled, interactive platform for creative talent from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia; alongside an extensive programme of talks, masterclasses and workshops.

Dubai Design Week is owned and managed by the Art Dubai Group and is the region's largest creative festival, reflecting Dubai's position as the design capital of the Middle East.

For more information, please visit: www.dubaidesignweek.ae

About Dubai Design District (d3)

Dubai Design District (d3) is a global creative ecosystem dedicated to design, fashion, architecture, art and retail. In line with Dubai's position as the leading business destination for the region and beyond, d3 is created as the first-of-its-kind creative ecosystem that enables people and businesses to grow and co-create, whilst simultaneously providing a strong platform for creativity. Strategically located in the heart of Dubai, d3 is one of the city's lifestyle and business destinations that challenges thousands of people to rethink the regular.

With state-of-the-art infrastructure designed to meet the needs of the industry and a business-friendly framework, the community offers creative talent the tools to drive innovation that permeates through various areas of Dubai's economy, further reinforcing Dubai's status as a UNESCO Creative City of Design.

d3 is a cutting-edge retail destination with over 40 retailers offering a variety of multi-brand boutiques, fashion brands, art galleries and showrooms. In addition, d3 is home to leading companies and talent including architects, interior designers, photography studios, product and fashion designers. The Design Quarter, the central component in the development of d3, features world-class offices, studios, showrooms and retail spaces spread across the district.

Some of the region's most popular and sought-after events take place in d3 and attract international artists and audiences to cultural exhibitions and gatherings such as Dubai Design Week and Sole DXB. The destination also regularly hosts a roster of industry talks, workshops and educational programming, accessible to people of all ages.

d3 is also home to the cutting-edge business incubator – in5 – that aims to support the fashion and design industries by offering students and entrepreneurs the opportunity to transform their ideas into successful commercial ventures. This ecosystem is further supported by the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation, the region's only university exclusively dedicated to design and innovation.

For more information, please visit: www.dubaidesigndistrict.com

About Dubai Arts & Culture Authority

On 8th March 2008, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched Dubai Culture & Arts Authority to be the custodian entity of the cultural and creative sector in the emirate, based on its cultural responsibility towards Dubai and to help define it at the local and global levels, enabling and developing these sectors to consolidate the emirate's position as an active global centre for creativity. In August 2020, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum issued a law to transfer Al Jalila Cultural Centre for Children to Dubai Culture, becoming an entity under its organisational structure. His Highness also issued a law in May 2021 to affiliate the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation to Dubai Culture to promote the strategic alignment of the cultural sector and raise it to a level that would enhance Dubai's position on the global cultural map.

Under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture, the Authority is committed to enriching the cultural scene of the emirate, based on the heritage of the United

Arab Emirates, and is working on building bridges of constructive dialogue between various civilisations and cultures to enhance Dubai's position as a global centre for art and culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent. The Authority is also committed to reviving Dubai's history and highlighting the splendid image of its contemporary cultural fabric through a series of innovative cultural initiatives, events and projects, as well as the cultural, historical and heritage assets it sponsors, including the management of five of the city's notable heritage monuments, six museums, and eight branches of Dubai Public Libraries.

Dubai Culture is working to develop regulatory frameworks for the cultural and creative sectors in Dubai, based on the priorities of its strategic roadmap for 2020 – 2026 and on the enablers that contribute to its realisation to seek and support talents and stimulate active participation from all segments of society. The aim is to create an economic system that stimulates creative industries and reinforces Dubai's position as a global cultural destination, in addition to its cultural responsibility of safeguarding the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the emirate.

For more information, please visit: www.dubaiculture.gov.ae

About A.R.M. Holding

A.R.M. Holding is a private investment firm and multi-focused economic enabler that creates synergies and opportunities through local, regional and global investments. At the core of the company's business strategy is its commitment to impactful investments, actively employing its resources to advance society and empower its players to pursue innovative solutions and inspire a better future. It collaborates with like-minded organizations and leverages its network and partnerships to create meaningful relationships and growth opportunities.

A.R.M. Holding's investments are focused on tech-enabled industries and sophisticated technologies around the world that demonstrate strong potential for long-term positive social impact. It also holds equity stakes in some of Dubai's foremost companies in a variety of sectors including Banking, Telecom, FMCG, Real Estate, and Hospitality. A.R.M. Holding has contributed to society with significant investments in numerous industries and versatile projects. In 2021, it became the first corporate patron of the Dubai Collection, the first institutional art collection in the emirate of Dubai. To learn more about A.R.M. Holding, please visit: www.armholding.ae